

other regions of Africa. Although I was unable to document the complete duration of the nesting cycle, I estimated that it fell well within the 45 d incubation and 75 d nestling periods reported by Brown et al. (1982). Similar pairings of dark females with light males have been recorded at at least two nests in Kenya (Brown 1966, Dewhurst et al. 1988). There are no records of nests containing more than a single nestling and records of two-egg clutches from South Africa are considered suspect by most authors (Brown et al. 1982, Steyn 1982). Adult behavior at nests in Kenya was consistent with my observations; incubation and brooding were conducted primarily or exclusively by the female, while the male made brief visits to the nest to deliver prey and nesting material (Brown 1955, Dewhurst et al. 1988).

E. Aliganyiri, A. Ermosi, T. Lawrence, J. Mugenyi, and K. Patrick assisted in the collection of data. I express my gratitude to the Department of Zoology, Makerere University Biological Field Station, C. Chapman, and L. Chapman for providing logistical support in Kibale National Park. A. Baker, C. Chapman, A. Kemp, and R. Watson provided constructive comments on the manuscript.—**Nathaniel E. Seavy, 223 Bartram Hall, P.O. Box 118525, Department of Zoology, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL 32611-8525 U.S.A.**

*J Raptor Res.* 34(1):60

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#### A CASE OF NEST PREDATION ON TURKEY VULTURES NESTING IN ARGENTINA

The Turkey Vulture (*Cathartes aura*) is widely distributed along the American continent (May, J.B. 1935. *The Hawks of North America*. National Association of Audubon Societies, New York, NY U.S.A.) but its breeding range in Argentina is not well-known. Only three records on Turkey Vulture nesting have been published up to now. Martín De La Peña (1992, *Guía de las Aves Argentinas. Literature of Latin America* [EDS.], Buenos Aires, Argentina) found two nests in northeastern Argentina and Jerome Jackson refers to another nest found on the Falkland Islands (1983, *Nesting phenology, nest-site selection and reproductive success of Black and Turkey Vultures*. Pages 245–270 in S. Wilbur and J. Jackson [EDS.], *Vulture biology and management*. Univ. California Press, Berkeley, CA U.S.A.). Turkey Vultures have a very diversified selection of nest sites, including hollow logs, prostrate trees and stumps, sides of steep cliffs, abandoned buildings or just on the ground (Coles, V. 1938, *Studies in the life history of the Turkey Vulture* *Cathartes aura septentrionalis* Wied. Ph.D. dissertation, Cornell Univ., Ithaca, NY U.S.A.).

We found a Turkey Vulture nest in Lihue Calel National Park, La Pampa Province, Argentina in 1998. Lihue Calel National Park is located in the central region of Argentina (38°00'S, 65°35'W) and contains bare rock hills (elevation 589 m) surrounded by flat semiarid desert (elevation 300 m). Vegetation in the area is a fine-grained mosaic of open patches and scrubs, including *Larrea cuneifolia*, *L. divaricata*, *L. nitida*, *Prosopis alpataco* and *Condalia microphylla*. Each year from September–February, large flocks of Turkey Vultures are commonly observed soaring in the park but no nests have been recorded.

We found the nest on 21 November and the female was incubating two eggs in the nest. The vulture flew away as we approached the site. The eggs were weighed and measured (68.7 × 49.05 mm, mass = 82 g; 69.05 × 48.65 mm, mass = 82 g). The nest was on the north side of a hill approximately 40-m high. The nest was near the top of the hill on the ground in a circular (8 m in diameter) patch of bushes (*Geoffroea decorticans*, *Larrea nitida* and *Lycium gilliesianum*). Height of the bushes averaged 2.3 m and they were surrounded by grass and rocks. Two rocks 70-cm high protected the nest on the east and south sides. The nest was not in a depression and there were only 5 or 6 small twigs and some feathers next to the eggs.

On 26 December, we revisited the nest and found two young that we weighed and measured (950 g, total length 345 mm, wingspan 753 mm, wing chord 147 mm and culmen 17.15 mm; 1030 g, total length 358 mm, wingspan 842 mm, wing chord 172 mm and culmen 19.15 mm). Their breasts and backs were covered with down but all sheaths of primaries and secondaries extended through the down layer and remiges emerged out from their sheaths about 2–4 cm. On 12 January 1999, the young were not found in the nest and the remains of one of their wings was about 6 m from the nest. No signs or footprints of predators were found at the nest site but the nest may have been depredated by a felid, fox or reptile.

We wish to thank National Parks Administration of Argentina, staff of the Lihue Calel National Park, and special thanks to José Antonio Sarasola, Daniel Muñoz, Rene Barquin, Agustin Lanusse and María Cristina Martín.—**José Hernán Sarasola, Ramón Alberto Sosa and Juan José Maceda, Facultad de Ciencias Exactas y Naturales, Universidad Nacional de La Pampa, Uruguay 151, (6300) Santa Rosa, La Pampa, Argentina.**